

Ford Told Senate Republicans

By David S. Broder

Washington Post Staff Writer

President Ford has been assured by two top Senate conservatives that there would be no widespread rebellion in Republican ranks if he chooses former New York Gov. Nelson A. Rockefeller as Vice President.

That word was given Mr. Ford by Sens. Barry M. Goldwater (R-Ariz.) and John G. Tower (R-Tex.), informed sources said.

Both men expressed personal preferences for other possibilities when they met with the President Sunday, these sources said, but they told Mr. Ford they would not join in any revolt if he picked Rockefeller.

While several conservative Republican senators and representatives publicly have opposed Rockefeller, a close associate of Mr. Ford said he could count no more

than five votes in the Senate and 17 in the House against Rockefeller, if he is the choice.

While Rockefeller's name continued to dominate speculation, a strong campaign continued in Congress and among Republican party leaders for Republican National Chairman George Bush, who is Goldwater's first choice. There were boomlets for half-a-dozen other men and women.

Mr. Ford himself apparently postponed any active consideration of the vice presidential choice while moving ahead on White House staff work.

Press secretary Jerald F. TerHorst confirmed that the President had asked William E. Timmons, head of the congressional liaison staff for former President Nixon and his top aides, Tom C. Korologos and Max

L. Friedersdorf, to remain in their jobs. All three men had been recommended by the joint congressional leadership in their meetings with Mr. Ford.

The President accepted the resignation of Frederic V. Malek as deputy director of the Office of Management and Budget. Malek, a one-time talent scout for the Nixon White House and a deputy director of the Committee for the Re-election of the President from July to November, 1972, has been planning to leave government since last April and told reporters his departure had nothing to do with Mr. Nixon's resignation.

Malek, 37, a management specialist, is joining Ludwig Co., an international shipping and raw materials firm, as a top executive in its New York headquarters.

Before Mr. Nixon's resignation, Malek was slated to

be replaced by Paul H. O'Neill, a career government official who is OMB's associate director for human and community affairs. Ford aides said the new President had made no decision on filling the vacancy.

TerHorst said Mr. Ford would give "high priority" to replacing Donald Johnson as director of the Veterans Administration. Johnson has been under heavy criticism from Congress for his management of VA education and medical programs.

On the vice presidential front, the names of Rockefeller, Bush and former Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird continued to bob up most frequently yesterday. While the other two are described as very willing to express a preference for reserve, Laird has continued to maning outside the government.

Rockefeller also emerged

Could Accept Rockefeller

as an acceptable choice in the House, where Minority Leader John J. Rhodes of Arizona included him among four frontrunners for the job. He listed the others as Goldwater, whom Rhodes has formally endorsed, Bush and California Gov. Ronald Reagan.

Rhodes said he asked President Ford at a meeting Sunday not to consider him as a vice presidential nominee.

"I told him it was no use even considering me because I believe I can do a better job for him by staying in the House," Rhodes said. "And I told him I could give him 20 other reasons if he needed more."

Support for Rockefeller also came from Rep. Delbert L. Latta, (R-Ohio) a defender of former President Nixon on the House Judiciary Committee. Latta said

that Mr. Ford needed to balance his administration by choosing a more liberal Republican as Vice President.

Meanwhile, the Northeast Republican Chairmen's Association, representing 11 states and the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, overwhelmingly endorsed Rockefeller as its choice for Vice President. Bush was the second choice.

Chairmen from Maryland, New Hampshire and Connecticut did not cast ballots.

The group named New York state GOP Chairman Richard M. Rosenbaum, a strong Rockefeller supporter, as its chairman.

Bush was described by one White House aide, who stressed that President Ford would make no decision on a vice presidential choice until he receives the response of various party officials and congressional lead-

ers later this week, as being "everybody's second choice."

The aide said that Bush was second choice of some party leaders who preferred Goldwater, and of others who preferred Rockefeller. He speculated that the GOP party chairman might be more broadly acceptable than any of the others.

Rep. Elford Cederberg (R-Mich.), a close friend of Mr. Ford, said after a meeting with the President on Sunday that Bush would be "quite a favorite in the House." Cederberg, who said that Mr. Ford had not made up his mind, added that Rockefeller also would "make a good choice."

A source close to Reagan said that the California governor did not consider himself a candidate and was supporting Goldwater. He added that Reagan did not want Rockefeller to be the nominee.